

Present: Laila Barr; Dan Chavre; Ray Day, Jr.; Dave Elliott; Kumiko Huff; Jane Kuechle; Miranda Leidich; Joan Michaels; Carla Saulter, chair; Bria Schlottman; Roger Thordarson, vice-chair

Excused: Kathy Dunn, Ed Miller, Tina Shereen

Staff: Barbara de Michele, Community Relations liaison; Victor Obeso, Metro's Service Development Manager

Saulter opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. De Michele acknowledged that this is Bria Schlottman's last meeting, since she is moving to California. Members thanked Bria for her contributions and wished her well.

Transit Budget and System Reductions

Obeso reviewed Metro's current budget crisis and the implications for service reductions. He said that staff is holding unprecedented meetings with the Executive and members of the Council to address the \$168 million gap in agency revenues projected for the next three years. Obeso has also been addressing city councils, Chambers of commerce, sub-area boards and other groups with a high interest in continuing transit service. He emphasized that the word "gap" refers to the difference between projected revenues and the projected financial plan through 2011. In fact, Metro must balance its budget each year.

Obeso took the group through a PowerPoint presentation that has been given to Council and other groups on several occasions. Among the policy issues that must be addressed: What percentage of Metro's funding should come from fares? How much of reserve funds should be tapped to address the crisis? Should cuts to service be permanent or temporary suspensions? How will service be restored? Which criteria will be used to determine reductions in service?

Letter of Support for Bus Advertising

Members discussed and edited a letter of support for Council action on bus wrap advertising (see attached). Thordarson moved/Kuechle seconded that the TAC adopt the letter as amended. De Michele will ensure that the letter is transmitted to the Council.

De Michele also stated that Tina Shereen will present her draft letter on advertising, which will be aimed at city council transportation chairs, at the July meeting. Shereen was unable to attend this meeting.

Response to Budget and Service Reduction Presentation

Members discussed Victor Obeso's presentation. Some members proposed that the group challenge the 40-40-20 formula, with others opposed to the idea. The group

agreed that they would not be able to reach a consensus on the issue. Others said there are many issues that the TAC could help prioritize, but the gap is so large that it's difficult to know where to begin. Schlottman said, "This is a big system and if you pull any string it moves something on the other side." Saulter said that she heard a consensus among the group that service should be preserved above other considerations. De Michele said that she would ask Victor Obeso where and when he would like to have their input to get clarity about the direction that TAC should take.

Committee Business

- Jane Kuechle was elected vice-chair and will serve as chair in October, November and December.
- Kumiko Huff gave a brief presentation on her visit to the Regional Transit Committee, which she said was quite informative. She had e-mailed a report to members earlier. The group thanked her for her service.
- There was no membership report.
- Kuechle and Day reported on the CAC sub-committee meeting. The King County Ethics office has ruled that the TAC cannot solicit any gifts whatsoever for the conference. There will be an announcement to that effect at the conference. The agenda is more complete, there's a budget, and De Michele is preparing registration materials.
- Kuechle volunteered to attend the Regional Transit Committee meeting on June 17.

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Saulter at 8:30 p.m.

June 9, 2009

The Honorable Dow Constantine, Chair
Regional Transit Committee
King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
KCC-CC-1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Constantine,

We, the members of the Transit Advisory Committee, are writing to express our continued support of King County Metro's partial bus wrap proposal. In July of 2007, responding to council concerns, the agency presented a proposal that addressed visibility and safety issues and was supported by both the Transit Advisory Committee and the Accessible Services Advisory Committee. That proposal has still not been put forward for a vote.

Our committee continues to support the proposal for the following reasons:

- **It addresses rider concerns.** Though there were a relatively small number of rider complaints about bus wraps (less than one percent of all complaints received by the agency in 2006), a majority of those Metro received were about the lack of visibility and lack of light that resulted from covered windows. The proposed wrap template leaves a large portion of each window uncovered, essentially eliminating both issues.
- **It is a risk-free source of revenue.** The bus-wrap program is administered and paid for by the vendor. Metro does not have to sell or design ads—or even apply them to the buses. All of the revenue from bus wraps comes without cost or risk to the agency.



- **It will provide much-needed funds.** The decision to eliminate full bus wraps cost Metro \$1.4 million over the past two years. This, at a time when Metro is considering cutting vital service—and in response to a very small number of rider complaints— is simply not justifiable. Though the partial bus wraps (because they will cover less of the bus and require custom designs by advertisers) will provide less revenue than full bus wraps, they are projected to earn over \$450,000 per year. Although \$450,000 is a small amount in a large budget, it means more money for service hours, shelters, and safety.

We are impressed by Metro's creative attempt to balance rider comfort and revenue demands. We therefore urge you to vote for this proposal.

Sincerely,

Carla Saulter, Chair
King County Transit Advisory Committee

Cc The Honorable Kurt Triplett, King County Executive
 Members, King County Council Regional Transit Committee
 Members, King County Council
 Chris Arkills, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Dow Constantine
 Arthur Thornbury, Legislative Aide, Regional Transit Committee
 Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County Department of Transportation
 Laurie Brown, Deputy Director, King County Department of Transportation
 Betty Gullledge-Bennett, Manager, King County DOT Communications
 Kevin Desmond, General Manager, King County Metro Transit Division
 Victor Obeso, Manager, King County Metro Service Development
 David Hull, Supervisor, King County Metro Service Planning
 Sharron Shinbo, Program Manager, King County Metro Marketing and Service Information